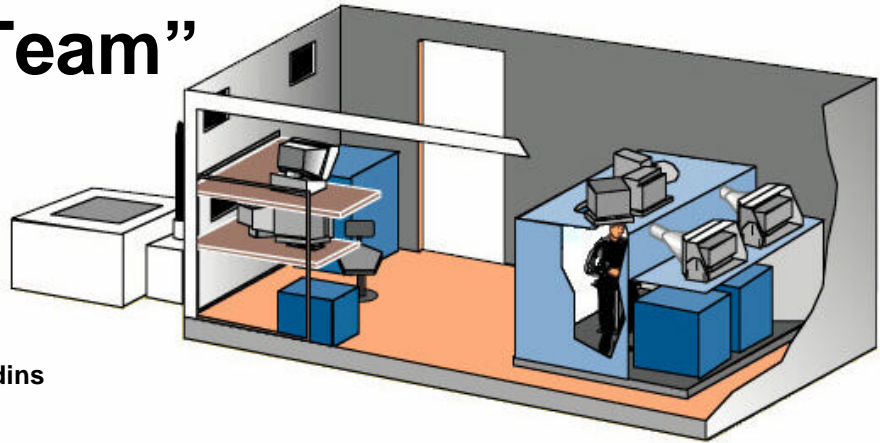


AGTS Deploys With "First Team" To Bosnia!



by Trudy Ryan and Major J.B. Iddins

The Advanced Gunnery Training System (AGTS), the U.S. Army's state-of-the-art gunnery trainer, continues to meet expanding training requirements. Normally stationed at CONUS locations, two of the M1A2 trainers were sent to Bosnia in late November in support of 1st Cavalry Division (1CD) troops during their deployment. The AGTS will sustain the gunnery skills of M1A2 crews who man M1A1 tanks while deployed to the Balkans and reduce or eliminate remedial training after completion of the mission. AGTS has proven it can develop and sustain individual, crew, and platoon precision gunnery skills to a proficiency level that permits rapid transition to live fire training or combat gunnery.

AGTS can be configured to meet the user's training needs, and can support institutional, unit, and deployed training situations. The AGTS configuration being deployed to Bosnia can be relocated easily. It has a self-contained shelter and environmental conditioning unit, and is flexible enough to accept power from a variety of sources, in this case a military power generator.

Currently there are three platoons of M1A2 AGTS: at Ft. Knox, Ft. Hood, and Ft. Carson, each with pre-brief and after-action review (PAAR) capability. The AGTS was fielded early to each location, even before M1A2 tank fielding, so it could be effectively utilized during New Equipment Training (NET). Seven M1A2 AGTS systems now in production include SEP capability, and are scheduled for delivery to Ft. Hood, Texas, beginning in March, 2000.

The two AGTS systems bound for Bosnia were to fly from Kelly AFB to Tuzla AFB, Bosnia, on a C-17 aircraft. They will be stationed at Camp McGovern and Camp Bedrock for one year. Personnel from the Army's Simulation, Training and Instrumentation Command (STRICOM) have been in theater to conduct site surveys and arrange logistics support. The

systems will be installed on a bed of railroad ties on level ground in lieu of concrete slabs. Contractor Logistics Support (CLS) will be provided by AAI/ESI, the same contractor for CONUS trainers. Qualified electronics technicians with extensive AGTS hands-on experience will be co-located with each trainer to provide high operational readiness.

At present, 1st Cavalry Division is the only division in the Army fully equipped with the M1A2. According to MSG Tim Dodge, Master Gunner for 1CD, "Given the fact that the division deployed two battalions of M1A2 tankers to an area of operations which is equipped only with M1A1 tanks, the logical conclusion was to deploy the AGTS to sustain the exceptionally perishable M1A2-specific skills. Additionally, the First Team is deploying other necessary Training Aids, Devices, Simulators, and Simulations (TADDS) to keep the soldiers well trained on a variety of weapon systems." AGTS stands ready to support the armor soldier wherever he may be deployed.

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